



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	INDIAN SHORES, FL	Accident Number:	MIA94FA179
Date & Time:	07/15/1994, 1610 EDT	Registration:	N2827V
Aircraft:	CESSNA 172XP	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Ferry		

Analysis

THE AIRPLANE WAS OBSERVED TO BE FLYING ABOUT 200 FT ABOVE THE WATER ALONG THE BEACH. A BYSTANDER VIDEOTAPED THE AIRPLANE AS WHAT APPEARED TO BE A LARGE BIRD COLLIDED WITH THE AIRPLANE IN THE WINDSHIELD AREA. THE AIRPLANE ROLLED INVERTED AND IMPACTED THE WATER. THE VIDEOTAPE WAS COMPUTER ENHANCED BY THE SAFETY BOARD. TWO DISTINCT DARK OBJECTS APPEARED IN FRONT OF THE AIRPLANE JUST BEFORE THE AIRPLANE PITCHED UP AND ROLLED INVERTED. ONE OF THE OBJECTS APPEARS TO STRIKE THE AIRPLANE. THE VIDEOTAPE SHOWS NUMEROUS PELICANS IN FLIGHT AND ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER PRIOR TO THE IMPACT. THE PILOT'S FACIAL INJURIES WERE CONSISTENT WITH A WINDSHIELD SHATTERING.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A BIRD COLLISION, WHICH RESULTED IN PILOT INCAPACITATION.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) OBJECT - BIRD(S)

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

2. (F) WINDOW, FLIGHT COMPARTMENT WINDOW/WINDSHIELD - FOREIGN OBJECT DAMAGE

3. (C) INCAPACITATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On July 15, 1994, about 1610 eastern daylight time, N2827V, a Cessna 172XP, registered to Shirley L. Costello, and piloted by Donald A. White crashed in Indian Shores, Florida, while on a 14 CFR Part 91 ferry flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and do flight plan was filed. The pilot received fatal injuries and the airplane was destroyed. The flight originated from Brooksville, Florida, about 40 minutes earlier.

The purpose of the flight was to deliver the airplane to the new owner who had it registered in her name. Witnesses observed the airplane at about 200 feet flying south about 300 yards off shore. They then observed the airplane enter an aileron roll, and the nose pitched down. The airplane then crashed into the water. An observer on the ground videotaped the accident sequence.

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

The pilot Donald A. White was the holder of a Commercial Pilot Certificate No. 230680550 with ratings for airplane single engine land and instrument airplane. He also held a flight instructor's certificate for airplane single engine and instrument airplane. His logbooks were not located and his last record of total flight time was on his application for a Class II Medical Certificate dated January 4, 1993. At that time he had logged 596 hours of flight time. Additional personnel information is attached to this report.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

N2827V was a Cessna 172XP serial No. 2231, powered by a Continental IO-360K engine. Available records indicated the airplane and engine had a total of 1785.7 hours. The last annual inspection was recorded completed on April 8, 1994, at 1,767 aircraft hours. Additional aircraft information is attached to this report.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The closest weather recording station to the accident scene was at St. Petersburg Airport, St. Petersburg, Florida. The recorded weather at 1550 was scattered clouds at 3,500 feet, broken clouds at 13,000 feet, visibility 7 miles, winds from 320 degrees magnetic at 9 knots, temperature 87 degrees F, dewpoint 72 degrees F, altimeter 32.09in hg.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The wreckage was located about 400 yards off shore in about 20 feet of water. Local divers recovered the pilot and he was transported to the medical examiner's office in Largo, Florida. The wreckage was finally completely recovered the next morning. All major components of the airplane were accounted for except the windshield. Examination of the wreckage was conducted in the salvager's impound yard. All flight controls were present and flight control continuity was established with all failures exhibiting overload signatures or recovery damage as attested to by the divers. The seat tracks for the pilot's seat were examined and no slippage or elongated holes were found. The propeller was curled and twisted, and the propeller shaft was failed with 45 degree failure edges noted on the shaft opposite the direction of rotation. The engine was removed, filled with oil, and shipped to Opa Locka, Florida, for examination. The examination of the engine revealed preexisting mechanical failures.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

A post-mortem examination of the pilot was conducted by Dr. Marie H. Hansen the Associate Medical Examiner of District Six. Dr. Hansen reported the cause of death to be multiple blunt trauma. She also reported that the deceased pilot had multiple dice and slice injuries to the face and anterior neck. Toxicological examination of the pilot tissue's was conducted by the Civil Aeromedical Institute of the FAA in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and the results were negative for alcohol, and basic and acetic drugs.

TESTS AND RESEARCH

The videotape of the accident sequence was taken into evidence custody by the local police department and was subsequently transported to the NTSB laboratory for further examination. When the tape was played on the NTSB computer enhancement console two distinct dark objects appeared in front of the airplane just before the airplane pitching up and rolling inverted into a dive into the ocean. One of the dark objects appears to strike the airplane and the other passes beneath the airplane. In viewing the videotape in the time before the accident numerous pelicans are observed in flight and on the surface of the water.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The videotape was returned to the owner via certified mail on August 11, 1994. The wreckage of the airplane was released to Mr. Gene Shiel, of Avemco Insurance, representing the owner on July 22, 1994.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	29, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	01/04/1993
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	596 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N2827V
Model/Series:	172XP 172XP	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	2231
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/08/1994, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	19 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1786 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360K
Registered Owner:	COSTELLO, SHIRLEY L.	Rated Power:	195 hp
Operator:	WHITE, DONALD A.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PIE, 12 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	11 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1550 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	55°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 3500 ft agl	Visibility	7 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 13000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	32 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	31 °C / 22 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	BROOKSVILLE, FL (BKV)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	VENICE, FL (VNC)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1530 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ANDREW A ALSTON	Report Date:	10/31/1995
Additional Participating Persons:	GAIL DAVIS; ORLANDO, FL GEORGE M HOLLINGSWORTH; MOBILE, AL BUCK B WELCH; WICHITA, KS		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).